

# NEWS RELEASE

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Temple to Celebrate Arbor Day**

(Temple) – A special Temple Arbor Day celebration will be held Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. at Meridith-Dunbar Elementary School Courtyard. Five trees will be planted in the courtyard as the beginning of an exciting outdoor classroom. The ceremony will include a proclamation from Mayor Bill Jones and remarks from Temple ISD representatives, elementary students, and City Arborist Val Roming. The public is encouraged to attend this Arbor Day event.

This event will mark the first step of a long-term project established by the Temple Tree Advisory Board to start an outdoor classroom to educate children on different native trees and provide a unique hands-on learning experience. “Our goal is to plant five different trees every year for Arbor Day, alternating at Meridith-Dunbar Elementary School and a school to be determined next year in the Belton Independent School District. The ultimate goal is to plant 35-40 different native species of trees with markers for each tree with the common and scientific name,” said Roming.

Mars Petcare donated the five trees that will be planted. The Chinquapin Oak, Shumard Oak, Live Oak, Cedar Elm, and Bald Cypress are all native to the area and will be planted in the courtyard of Meridith-Dunbar Elementary School.

“Arbor Day has a special meaning in Temple,” said Roming. “The first Texas Arbor Day was held in Temple by resident W. Goodrich Jones on February 22, 1889. One year later, the first statewide observance of Arbor Day was held in Austin. We want a celebration that pays tribute, not just to the value of trees but also the significance of this day to our community.”

Hosting an official Arbor Day celebration is also part of the requirements to maintain Temple’s title as a Tree City USA. The Tree City USA program, sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Services and the National Association of State Foresters, provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and

cities. “Having the Tree City USA designation has really pushed us, as a department, to expand our tree planting and community tree programs,” said Parks and Leisure Services Director, Ken Cicora. “We have developed the Temple Tree Advisory Board, A Tree for Me program, the annual Arbor Day celebration, the tree farm, and much more.”

The Temple Tree Advisory Board helps develop public awareness and education programs relating to trees. The board promotes Arbor Day, maintains a 5-year plan for planting trees on city property, and advises the Parks and Leisure Services Department on issues relating to planning or maintenance of trees and other landscaping. The board is comprised of five volunteer members of the community that meet quarterly.

For more information about the Arbor Day Celebration or the Temple Tree Advisory Board, please visit [www.TempleTrees.org](http://www.TempleTrees.org) or contact Val Roming at 254.298.5401.

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